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## THE BLOOD-STAINED LEAF.

IN the station of Benares in the upper provinces of India, I was one morning visiting the hospital as usual. As I entered the General Hospital, I was told that a young man, belonging to one of the regiments, was anxious to speak to me. In the inner ward I found, lying on his *charpoy* in a corner, a raw face, and walking up to him, said, "I am told you wish to see me; I do not recollect the pleasure of having seen you before." "No," he said, "I have never seen you; yet you seem no stranger, for I have often heard speak of you." I asked him if he was ill or wounded. "I am ill," he replied.

He went on to say that he had just come down from Cawnpore. "Perhaps you would like me to tell you my history. It may be you remember, a long time since, some of our men going into the hospital opposite, as you sat reading to one of the Highlanders. There were some half-dozen or more of them; they went to see a sick comrade. You went up presently to them, and told them how grateful you and all your country-people were to your noble soldiers for so readily coming to protect you all, and how deeply you sympathized with them in the noble cause in which they were now going to take a share. Then you talked to them of the danger which would attend them. You reminded them that life is a battle-field to all, and asked them if they were soldiers of Christ, and if they had thought of the probability of their falling in battle. I have heard all about that long talk you had with the men. Then you gave your Bible to one, and asked him to read a passage. He chose the 23d Psalm, and you prayed. They asked you for a book or tract to remind them of what had been said, and you gave all you had in your bag. But for one man there was none. They were to start that afternoon, so that you had not time to get one. But you went to the apothecary, and got pen and paper from him. When you came back you gave this paper to him, telling him you should look for him in heaven."

As he said this, the poor fellow pulled out from the breast of his shirt half a note-sheet of paper, on which I recognized my writing, though nearly illegible from wear. On it were written the 1st, 7th, 10th, 14th, 15th and 17th verses of the 5th chapter of 2d Corinthians :

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house **not** made with hands, eternal in the heavens." . . .

"For we walk by faith, not by sight:" . . .

"For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." . . .

"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." . . .

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become **new**."

There was also written on it the following hymn :

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds,  
In a believer's ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.

It makes his wounded spirit whole,  
And calms the troubled breast;  
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,  
And to the weary rest.

Dear name! the Rock on which I build,  
My Shield and hiding-place;

My never-failing Treasury, filled  
With boundless stores of grace.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,  
My Prophet, Priest and King,  
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,  
And cold my warmest thought;  
But when I see Thee as thou art,  
I'll praise thee as I ought."

"That man," he continued, "and I were in the same company, but he was a day ahead of me. We met in Cawnpore, then marched on with the rest to Lucknow. Whenever we halted, the first thing Walker did was to take out his paper, and read it aloud to those who cared to hear; then he prayed with us. As we marched, he spoke much of his old father and mother, and only brother, and wished he could see them once more. But he was very, very happy, and ready to 'go home,' if God saw fit. As we neared Lucknow, he dwelt much on eternity, and said to me, 'It is very solemn to be walking into death. I shall never leave this ill-fated city.'

"We had many fights, standing always side by side. I am an orphan; I lost my parents when a child, and was brought up at school. I never had one to love me, and life was indeed a weary burden; yet beyond all was darker still, for I knew nothing of a Saviour. Walter's reading and words came to my heart—he was so kind to me, and always called me brother. I never loved till I had him. He had found Jesus, and led me to love him too. I can not find words to say how I joyed, when at last I felt I had a Friend above. Oh! I never shall forget my joy when I first understood and believed. We had no book, only the paper. We knew it off by heart, and I don't know which loved it best.

"At last, in a dreadful fight in one of the gardens, a ball struck Walter in the chest. Words can not say my grief when he fell—the only one I had to love me. I knelt by him till the garden was left in our hands, and then carried him to the doctors. But it was too late—life was almost gone. 'Dear Willie,' he said to me, 'I am only going home first. We have loved to talk of home together; don't be sorry for me, for I'm so happy.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!"

Read me the words she wrote.' I pulled them out from his bosom, all stained with his blood, as you see, and repeated them. 'Yes,' he said, 'the love of Christ has constrained us. I am almost home. I'll be there to welcome you and her; good-bye, dear Willie.' And he was gone, but I was left. Oh! it was *so very* bitter! I knelt by him, and prayed I might soon follow him. Then I took his paper, and put it in my bosom, where it has been ever since, I and some of our men buried him in the garden. I have gone through much fighting since, and came down here on duty with a detachment yesterday. They think me only worn with exposure, and tell me I shall be soon well; but I shall never see the sky again. I would like to lie by his side, but it can not be."

Poor fellow! he cried long and bitterly. I could not speak, but pressed his hand. At length he said, "So you'll forgive me making so bold in speaking to you. He often spoke of you, and blessed you for leading him to Jesus. And he it was who led *me* to Jesus. We shall soon be together again: and won't we welcome you when you come

home?" We then read and prayed together. He was quite calm when I rose from my knees. He was too weak to raise his head even from the pillow, but was peaceful and happy. "I feel," he said, "that I shall not be able to think much longer; I have seen such frightful things. Thank God, I have sure and blessed hope in my death. I have seen so many die in fearful terror."

I turned to go. He said, "Dear lady, when I am gone promise me this paper shall be put in my coffin. It gave me a friend on earth who led me to a Saviour in heaven." I promised. Next morning I went to see him, but oh, how sadly altered did I find him! Those soft brown eyes were glassy and lustreless. He was never to know me again. Dysentery, in its fearful, rapid form, had seized him during the night. I took his hand in mine, it was clammy and powerless. Three of the men in the ward came up to me and said, "Till sense left him, he was talking of home with Jesus." They knelt with me in prayer beside the poor sufferer. I went again the next day. His body was still there, but his spirit had fled a few minutes before. He was covered with his blanket, and the coolies were waiting to bear him away. I took his paper from his pillow, where it had been laid, and went to the apothecary. We walked back to the corpse, and he placed it in the hands of the departed. He was buried that evening. I have often thought since, how beautiful was that heavenly love which bound those two dear young soldiers together; how it sweetened their last days on earth. They were indeed friends in Jesus, and though their remains lie parted, yet they are both sleeping in Jesus. Oh, what a resurrection theirs will be in the day of his appearing!

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And now will the reader ask himself this question: "If the truth in this hymn, and these few texts, believed, were, with the Spirit's blessing, the means of bringing these two immortal souls to glory, would not the same hymn and the same texts, if slighted and despised have been a means of deepening their condemnation?"

This is a solemn, searching question for any one dwelling in a land so full of Bibles, and of all means of grace, as ours.